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CINEMA

Papers



Bryan on the Beach

The significant Mr Roeg
The man who shot Mel:
a Dean Semler interview
Why we need overseas
actors, by Hector Crawford

**A New Zealand
supplement**

**Noises from
the Quiet Earth**



September 1985

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NEWS PLUS ... The weekend-end budget, the *Village Voice's* guide continues its tribute to Miranda Cornish. Classified 1987... This week's film selection sends fans to the Japanese Republic of Chitose, settles ties to Tokyo and some US government film incentives. Festival reports from Adelaide, Melbourne, Munich, Sydney, Tacoma and Tokyo. Plus two new sections, an international industry roundup featuring news from the IRI, Estelle Fisman Gallery, who has been cancelled, and two pages of short profiles — in this issue featuring Chinese Golden Palm winner Hui Kuanhua, very independent filmmaker Shylin Kuo and Melbourne producer Ross Cullen.

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BEACH BOY One of the country's most quotable exports acts and now produces. Bryan Baker talks to David Kosso about Australian identity, film acting and *The Empty Beach*

ISSUES: STAR WARS

in which *Guerra Fiebre* asked prominent members of the film and television industry to speak out. Television pioneer Hector Crawford looks at the issues with some comments on the place of imported actors in the Australian industry.

MECHANISMS OF ACTION

NEIGHBORS In a special set of articles, we look at film and television in New Zealand. Tony Marshall talks to vibrant film director of *Vega*! The first New film in competition at Cannes. Nick Roddick provides an overview of the film industry. From its early offerings to the innovative boom and the current aftermath of the end of tax concessions, and Warren Maysie looks back on a quarter of a century of state-run New Zealand television.

ROEG'S GALLERY

RODG'S GALLERY In Cannes to nurture his ideal film, *Indignance* through the rigors of competition Nicolas Rodg talked to Nick Roddick about big actors, the small noires of *Eureka* and other tagalogs and feints

FACTS AND FIGURES

FACTS AND FIGURES Fred Haden talks to promoting agent Dean Simms about his work before and beyond *Thunderstone*, plus a round up of the current product on scene, with a special report on the status of *Return to Eden*, and a first look at how Autodesk's innovations have been taking it into the office.

FILM REVIEWS

FILM REVIEWS Full-length reviews of *Broken Mirrors*, *Don't Call Me Girle*, *Full Moon in Paris*, *An Independent Obsession*, *Insignificance*, *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome*, *Morris Most's The Naked Country*, and *A Nighttime on Elm Street*. Plus shorter capsule reviews of all the recent releases. **BY**

ROCK REVIEWS

BOOK REVIEWS **AND** — *The Biggest Little Player of Them All* by Billy Lushy, *A Night at the Powers*, *Ten Decades of British Film* by Gilbert Adair and Nick Roddick, *Learning to Dream: The New British Cinema* by James Park, and *British Cinema Now* edited by Martin Acland and Nick Roddick.



Films *Amelia* above, *Michael Lind* at *The Prisoner* and *Thomas Rafter* at *The Actress* on *Norfolk Islet's Judge/Barrister* below, some of the century's New Zealand film production and its museum. Next is the *Black Country*.



CINEMA
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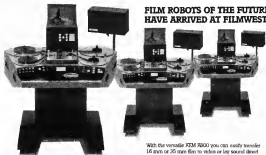
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From cover: Bryan Brown in *The Empty Beach*; Matt Smith (Lance) in *The Quiet Earth*

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LIFE OF BRYAN

One of a handful of Australian actors with a real overseas reputation, Bryan Brown is still uneasy about his Australian identity, as Gena Knauer found out when she talked to him in Hollywood about his latest Australian picture, *The Empty Beach*.

"Acting is universal," says Bryan Brown, "and what I express is the fact that I'm very Australian. I'm consoled by the Sydney western suburbs, the language, the country, and the fact that I've been fairly polished and commoditized — I hate the things that made it easy for me to express myself in Australia and as an Australian."

Brown's career in film now spans almost ten years, from his first role in *Love Letters* from *Tessie Rinal* (1977) to the war-cracking, anticomic private detective, *Chill Hardy*, in his latest Australian film, *The Empty Beach*. The latter is a portrait of comic standing. "I've liked the idea of playing Chill Hardy since I read the book," says Brown. "I liked the fact that there was a very identifiable Australian, written very well and with all the ingredients that I like in a male character: not being to suspect, a sense of humor, capable — a man who doesn't make excuses. That sort of detective has been portrayed in American movies before — in Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe, Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer. But here was an Australian one that was just as identifiable, just as strong and good as what the Americans had written. And quite flexible, too."

Brown was first approached about four years ago to do one of the Hardy books. At the time, *Dick Maize* was going to produce, Stephen Warlock directed, and Peter Coombs — author of the Hardy books — was to adapt his own novel, *White After Like Lousy*.



project, it slipped away, however, to be resurrected two years later by John Edwards and Tim Rodd, who had acquired the rights to the *Heath* books. As well as being invited to play the lead, Brown was also offered involvement in the creative side of the picture's production — something which he eagerly accepted.

Although several drafts were written by Peter Corris, the film's screenplay was eventually turned over to Keith Schofield. But it was Corris's wish that the project remain true to the character he had invented, regardless of any changes to the plotline and Brown explains that this was their central objective throughout the making of the picture. "My main concern," he says, "was not to deviate from the Cliff Hardy that Peter Corris wrote. You go back to the reason why you decided to make the movie. And the thing that originally caught our attention was this character, Cliff Hardy. It would have been pretty silly for us to spend two years making a movie that changed the character Corris developed. The structure of a movie is always going to change, but we couldn't let it wander off somewhere where Hardy wouldn't fit it would. We set out to make a strong private detective yarn, and not make up Peter Corris's Cliff Hardy. I think we were there at 90% of the time."

One thing Brown is emphatic about is that Cliff Hardy is not an Australian superhero. "He's certainly not Jason Bond. It's true we are working on a sequel — *Clare* is a terrific *White Mischief* — and I'd like to do Hardy again, but I don't see the Cliff Hardy books as being world-beaters, or big stuff. I would like to see it get real good, strong, solid stories every five years that are really well at the box office. I want to present a man that all decent people will like, but who isn't necessarily everybody's cup of tea."

The Hardy character may be the star of the film, but his personal life is only hinted at in *The Empty Beach*. "It's not a type of movie who wants to explore every no much," says

Brown, who feels that it is one of the things that identifies him as an Australian character. "It's like, 'hold it up, let us see it.' That's a bit to do with us, with what makes us a bit different to the Americans or the English. I don't think Cliff would particularly like to sit down and talk to two young people about his parents life." And of the possibility of a romance with Ann Winter (Anna Maria Montanari) — something which seems to be on the cards — Brown maintains: "Brown says that after extensive talks about whether Corris's Hardy would have had 'a number with this girl or not', they decided against it. 'I think the reality when, for whatever reason, they didn't. It's another point about the man, and you can draw your own conclusions from it.'"

Brown does not feel, however, that Cliff is without emotion. One scene he was adamant about saving — and one that director Chris Thomson originally wanted to lose — comes after Hardy has witnessed an innocent man being shot to death. He has been up all night, and as the morning dawns slowly — and rather sunnily — discusses the gory scene in his flatmate. "I wanted him to be laid and hardy says 'brown' and Chris gave way on that. For me, it was very important that you see him, if he didn't hold himself together, that you see him in his flatmate. It says to another book that Hardy would have wound up at the pub, playing pool with his mates all day, and having a whale about how the world should be. In Corris's book, the boy is a nurse. He doesn't get Hardy beaten in spirit, and he will keep coming back. But the reality of Hardy is that he also has a bloody heart, and he has to fight to keep on top of things. The reason that showed how he could have himself but instead got on with it — these were

Aftermaths of violence in The Empty Beach. Facing page, Cliff Hardy (Brown) puts his body on the line for the innocent. Remains that from the day. Below: Anna Maria Montanari as Ann Winter in the wreckage of her apartment

"The thing that originally caught our attention was this character, Cliff Hardy. It would have been pretty silly for us to spend two years making a movie that changed the character Peter Corris developed"

the ones that I thought were very necessary to the character, and I fought for them. Sometimes, I fought too hard!"

Brown's beginnings as an acting professional, far all the 'Australian control' of his movie role, actually happened overseas, and in a fashion against the odds. He studied acting in a school where the director of the Australian film industry. After spending four years in a minor theatre, beating the odds of a being insurance job, he decided to give professional acting "a bloody good run", his goal being to get a professional job within five years. It took a couple of months, but only after he decided to go to England according to him. They were telling only English or American agents at the time, and he decided to go there and then then a second head at home.

In Australia, Brown then worked with some of his directors at least twice: Stephen Walcott, Tom Jeffrey, Donald Crombie, John Daigan, Bruce Beresford. His intense interest in choosing a film, or a director is a personal commitment, and the consideration of the reasons about involved give for making a film, rather than their track record. "I'm not the sort of person who gets very agitated by what someone has done. I like working with people I get along with, and whose ideas and enthusiasm I like. I've liked every movie I've been

involved with. I've never had a bad time on a movie. I've never found people jumping up and down and accusing, hating this or that person."

Brown is even generous in his opinion of *The Empty Beach*, his first overseas project — more generous than were most Australian ventures. He cites "the obvious contrast: where are the Australians? What is Barbara Streisand doing in the subtext?" And he understands that, when the country was just beginning to forget its identity in film, it was difficult to see another country taking one of its stories, that it was a question of economics. "It would have been terrific if Australia would have told the story, but the reality was that it was a big media drama, and the people who had it were how to do it that kind of melodrama. And it pulled together in, just like the *Dynasties* and the *Gallies* do. The American owned it, and they were going to make it the way they wanted to. Their makers, yes. It's possible that the role of Jack O'Connell, though, Brown had to stretch his Australian experience by learning the art of sheepwatching. "I think that while before I could shoot a sheep without breaking my neck, I was in the last five seconds — three weeks of the most physical, back-breaking work. I've now done, so he also is deliver something to make it easier for the director in photography."

When choosing his roles nowadays, however, Brown has another consideration that he and his wife, actress Rachel Ward, should not neglect. He would have loved to take the opportunity of doing the *Deaf Trilogy* on the Sydney stage last year, but turned it down because Rachel was working out of state. "I don't know how often people do it, but most of the time I see it all falling apart for them. It's up to you to find your own way. Things fall apart like what you know what you're doing." And before oversteps over any opportunities but because of their attachment. "People say a movie can change the course of events, and it does — it's a certain way.





"To give up telling Australian stories because of money is bloody stupid. It'll leave nothing behind for Australia in a hundred years when they look back and say, 'Oh, they made that rubbish, did they?'"

But there is no one thing that is as important as film to be done. It all comes down to the opportunity to put you out there and you don't get others. You don't see how your life is going to be at the cinema, you make it."

New in prominence for playing the role of the 134-million-Dollars De Lauroville production of James Cameron's *The Firm*, Brown is currently making several films and working with an executive coach. After a sixteen-week shoot in China, he, his wife and their daughter, Rose, will return to Sydney, where he will continue developing a film from Cliff Hardy's script, as well as start work on a movie version of *Backyard*, a play he did four years ago at the Malthus. In March, he and Rachel Ward will star in *The Firm* together with *The Firm* and *The Firm* to be directed by Ken Casanova.

Like Cliff Hardy, Brown's attitude towards his career is to put it on with it. And his greatest concern for the Australian film industry is general is for it not to be influenced by the pressure to make money even as the industry moves to the type of films that are profitable. "We have to be careful that we don't stop telling Australian stories, because as soon as we do, we don't have an industry. Whatever we get and then in eighteen months, and after that it'll all be over, because because American stories are making it as and also submitting to Australia. What we do need is receptive to the marketing of our movies, which will help us make that change we need make movies that Americans will like. We have to make movies that Australians like, and some of those will be transferable to another side. To give up telling Australian stories because of money is bloody stupid. It'll leave nothing behind for Australia in a hundred years when they look back and say, 'Oh, they made that rubbish, did they?' (Laughs), they'll look back at the games made about Australia, and they'll find the winners."

Brown is also skeptical about the fact that much of his recent work has been abroad. There have been two features in England: *Give My Regards to Broad Street*, in which he played Paul McCartney's Aussie manager, and *Prick*, the story of a businessman who is kidnapped for no apparent reason and, after his return, becomes obsessed with finding his captors. There have been *F/X*, an action film recently completed in New York, which is the story of a movie director whose son who becomes involved with the underworld, and saw the skills of his profession in use for him. Although not specifically written for an Australian screen, the latter part was

Brown and Brown on the Malthus role that they played about a film that was made in 1980, or for at the time was

ISSUES

The RULES of the GAME

The first point I always try to get over is that any stand on imposing a limited number of overseas artists has nothing to do with Australian artists not being good enough: it is purely for box-office reasons. To have a drawcard, or a box-office name — or whatever you like to call it — has been a part of show business since time immemorial. There will always be drawcards in the theatre, in the concert hall, on the television screen and in the cinema. But you can't build your career on it's a long, long process. Sooner or later, those Australians who have the charisma will be the drawcards. We are doing it slowly, but there are still not enough of them: there's Mel Gibson, Jack Thompson, Bryan Brown, Tom Burlinson, Judy Davis, Sigrid Thornton... (I don't know about others). Our people are starting to be recognised internationally, but it's a long, slow, laborious process, which we're not to work at.

In film and television, America is the major market: that's where the money is. And, in America, they must have faces that are known to the American public. With *All the Rivers Flow*, which was all Australians, we just could not get press coverage in America, because there was not a face that anyone knew. They don't point your face to be nice to you, you know: they point it to sell magazines. And magazines sell on well-known faces. That's what it's all about.

By now, we should have been able to hire those faces, but we're such a wretchedly backward country when it comes to television. We went about the last developed country in the world to have it, and what did we do? We introduced it in black and white, so help me God! We had black and white television in this country up until about 1975. If a country is in colour, they don't want to know you if you are in black and white. So, we were not able to get out and establish ourselves in the export markets that we already had in radio. We expected to move over, but the way into television exports has been slow.

We're still caught with a country that has vast distances and a small population, which is a big problem for manufacturing, as well as what you make. In feature film and television programmes, there is little or no protection against the imported

product. Over 25 years ago, in 1959, I produced a little booklet about commercial television programmes in Australia. I wrote: "Australia as a nation cannot accept, or then perhaps) and persuasive medium, the present flood of another nation's culture, without danger to our national identity. This does not imply a criticism of the values of American television programmes. They may be extremely suitable for the American audience, but a programme structure which may be excellent from an American point of view may not be the best for Australia. What we need and must have is television which is distinctly Australian in programme character."

"Australians have proved many times in the field of entertainment that their talent compares with that of other countries. We have the singers, the writers, the actors, musicians and producers,

"If we are to sustain and improve the quality of our product, with a consequent increase in the employment of Australian actors, writers, directors and technicians, we must continue to expand overseas, particularly in the vast and rewarding US market!"

but they, like the personnel of all other branches of the industry, cannot compete economically against the goods dumped in Australia and sold at far below their cost of production. In many instances, they have been compelled to journey overseas to obtain employment for these talents.

"The dominance of America in the Australian motion picture

ISSUES



Hector Crawford is one of Australia's most senior producers: from radio drama in the fifties, to television, mini-series and feature films in the eighties, he has been active in the Australian production industry for over 30 years. Just recently he has, like a lot of producers, been coming into conflict with Australian Actors and Announcers Equity over the use of foreign stars in his productions, particularly on last year's *Fortress*, a Crawford's Production that Equity objected to, was cancelled, then restarted. Here, in conversation with *Cinema Papers* Editor Nick Reddick, he argues that Australian film and television drama needs imported actors if it is to grow and prosper.

Field must not be regarded as the even more persuasive medium of television. Australia has denied and I hope, will continue to enjoy great benefits from our association with America, but there we must accept only on our own terms, and insist that they are written into an Australian fabric of our own making and design."

That is precisely what I am still advocating today. I haven't moved an inch. Our television has got to be predominantly Australian. But the game has changed to a degree, in that it is now possible to co-sponsor getting into the overseas markets in a substantial way. The considerable support given to Australian film and television drama production over the last three years by IIBA has enabled this country to develop the capacity and ability to make programmes of a standard which can be marketed overseas. Although our industry is small by comparison with the United States of America and the United Kingdom, our programmes are beginning to be sold to these countries, and are relevant successfully in this highly competitive broadcasting environment.

Nevertheless, we are still only in the early stages of establishing an Australian television export industry. If we are to sustain and improve the quality of our product, with a consequent increase in the employment of Australian actors, writers, directors and technicians, we must continue to expand overseas, particularly in the vast and rewarding US market. In order to be able to produce high-budget, quality television drama in Australia, we must be able to sell these programmes to the US market, thus generating the substantial financial returns that are needed to make them economically viable.

A lot has been said about what happened to the industry in Great Britain, where they had a far higher penetration of overseas actors, technicians and directors than we have ever had. But, when you get down to brass tacks, you say to them: "What did happen?" And they say, "Oh, the Americans all went away and the whole place closed down: we've never been able to recover!" It's a kind of rubbish! Their trouble is — and ours is even worse — that they have a relatively small population, and they speak English. If you speak English, you need a population of around a

hundred million to be viable in the film business. We've got fifteen-and-a-half million, and we speak English. If we spoke America, we'd be ever so much better off, because at least they'd have to go to some pains and steel such. The small population and being English speaking is what has knocked us.

Now, we've got to compensate for that somehow. IIBA has been a help — a considerable help, and we've got to stay with it. And we've got to use it to get into export markets. If we've got to have two Americans to get the picture into America, we should use two Americans. It's as simple as that, that I would never have a foreign person play an Australian, because I don't believe they can. Nor do I believe Australians can play Americans. I find nothing more embarrassing than to go to the cinema where the whole cast is speaking America, and they're all Australians and

"We've got fifteen-and-a-half million people, and we speak English. If we spoke America, we'd be ever so much better off, because at least they'd have to go to some costs and dub it"

their accents are terrible! By the same token, I don't believe Americans can play Australians.

In the end, it's all a question of budgets. The cost per hour of producing a mini-series in Australia can vary a great deal, depending mainly on quality, number of episodes and the salarys of the stars. The majority of mini-series currently produced would cost between \$600,000 and \$800,000 per hour. A sale to an Australian network of Australian rights would bring a gross return of the order of \$200,000 to \$250,000 per hour. This



A mixture of men, women and horses, good takes and inspired errors. Left to right: Sally Thomason and John Wood in *All the Rivers Run*, Rachel Ward in *Forever* and Linda Fiorentino — TV's *Private Benjamin* — and Andrew McFarlane in *The Flying Dutchman*

motion that only about one-third of the cost of quality drama production can be recouped within Australia. We must make sales to the vast American market to provide most of the other two-thirds. Should the government's inevitable support under IIBA ever be withdrawn without our first firmly establishing ourselves in the American market, our industry would collapse.

With *Fortress*, when we told the partners to Hugo Ross Office for 50% of the budget, it was on the condition that they have a face that was known to the American public. But Equity refused to support the issue of a permit for one person to work, and there are about 15 speaking parts in the picture! That left us stranded: the deal with IIBA was that it had to be a film that was known. There was to be no other condition, apart from that, we could cast anybody. So, when the Minister was not prepared to overturn the decision, that left us with no option but to cancel, at a cost of about £700,000, which had already been spent. As time wore on, of course, Rachel (Ward) married Bryson, was living in Australia and was available, so we were back. But the cancellation and the

employment of Australian writers, actors and so forth. So do we

What we're so short is to get a good stream for our investors, and to get employment for Australians. Now, importing one or two actors is not going adversely to affect employment here. It is going to create it. It is going to make you can go ahead and do things that, otherwise, you wouldn't be able to do. I think it helps the financial success of the project, and therefore it's good for the industry, it's good for programming, and it's good for feature films. It's not the first end of the wedge or anything like that: if you let too many in, the whole business goes out of the window. I'm not arguing for a clause that we should bring in conditions of foreign actors. I would be quite happy to have as absolute maximum of these important actors.

What I can't understand, though, is why Paul Cox is able to bring out an actress, and Crawford Productions aren't. Equity will say, "Paul couldn't cast it in Australia". I couldn't cast it in Australia, either. You are allowed to bring out an overseas star to make a commercial, and that's great to sell product to Australians! I ask you! Talk about discrimination in our industry! Equity last year let in seventeen theatrical companies, plus 409 overseas artists. So people were coming here by the carload: they're allowed to be in the restaurants, at the clubs, opera, ballet, concerts, they're allowed to be making commercials on television and for plays, but not for film and television production.

It is ironic — and regrettable — that the opportunities for Australian actors and their fellow television workers should, on the long term, be limited by the restrictive policy of their union towards imported actors. Contrary to being a 'defence of employment', the union's policy is restrictive in that it isolates the production of films that are more likely to sell internationally. This is a policy which has been drawn up without any consultation with producers who have experience of the overseas marketing of Australian programmes, and who have invested considerable effort and capital in the development of an export market for the Australian film and television industry. It is a policy which is holding back that development and, if allowed to operate as it has to date, will stifle and may well destroy the industry. ★

"What I can't understand is why Paul Cox is able to bring out an actress, and Crawford Productions aren't"

tense context and all that were a very, very solemn and bitter pill. I think Equity is able to some degree that a producer won't resort, but they take so long to give you an answer that you are left with a choice. Our choice was to cancel.

Generally, though, we get on very well with Equity: our objectives are almost identical. The only difference could be that they want more money for less work, and we want much more work for less money! That's an over-simplification, of course! Apart from that, they want things that are Australian: they want



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LONG WHITE CLOUD

New Zealand film

eighties

With a population at just over three million, New Zealand is too small to sustain a film industry without government help and/or overseas sales. And, although the past few years have seen some pretty impressive films emerge from the Land of the Long White Cloud, the future is currently a little uncertain. This time last year, what is now hanging over the head of the Australian film and television industry — the withdrawal of tax concessions — happened in New Zealand. Nick Roddick looks at the state of the Kiwi movie industry in 1985 and finds that, although things have certainly changed, the islands are by no means shrouded in gloom.



UD COVER

New Zealand — Overseas

in the

Depending on how you look at it, film-making in New Zealand is either going on for 50 years old, or she will be celebrating its eighth birthday in 1985. The discrepancy is not hard to account for: although films were made on a sporadic basis from 1894 through to the mid 1920s, there was nothing that could reasonably be described as a film industry before its vigorous Australian called Roger Donaldson, who had gone to NZ to avoid the Vietnam draft, made *Sleeping Dogs* in 1970. 1977 also saw Geoff Murphy's *Wise Man*, Tony Williams' *Solo* and Michael Port's *On the Edge*.

Belonging thus, after several producer John O'Shea, "it was all pretty much Graeme Munn and I" (though the entrepreneur New Zealand Film Archive has been doing trails and research all over the country with participation of the rural historical society). O'Shea himself provides a bridge between the very early film and the late 1970s boom: with musical tastes and boundless optimism, he made three features — *Broken Bay* (1973), *Runaway* in 1974, and *Don't Let It Get You* in 1976. Before Murphy, Donaldson et al, the only other New Zealand filmmaker to deserve even passing mention is Russell Harty who — again against all the odds — managed to make seven feature films in a career spanning five decades, from *My Lady of the Cave* in 1922 to *Laurel & Stuart* in 1972. As the American film historian, Robert Dyer, has written, "few other figures in

world cinema can match his testimony of active film production" and Russell Harty's film track with the low good Hollywood films that depict contemporary society and the past with humor, compassion and insight" (*Landscape* June 1971).

1977, however — and *Sleeping Dogs* is pertinent — was the start of the New Zealand film industry. It was a birth complicated by a number of factors. First, there was the misapprehension, along the lines of the APFC, that with a successful film and career and at any rate annually, a form of funding for the white industry that provided a system of criticism of independent the long-term financial dollar benefits. Thirdly — and paradoxically — there was the advantage of that same trade, and, consequently, non-protected government subsidies began. (See *Waves* Murphy's article on page 26 of this issue, which forced a new amendment to film-making to get a done).

Provisions for a Cinematograph had been building up since the early 1950s, was given a shot in the arm by an Arts Council report in 1970 and was finally established, after the kind of delay which only government can manage, by an Act of Parliament in December 1976 (in the years which have followed, the NZFC has become a vital part of the New Zealand film industry). The main majority of the funding made to the country have passed through projects at some stage in their life, and a fair proportion have received other script development money or development. As one might expect, the Commission has come in for a fair amount of criticism from filmmakers

who have been let down or who, as a broader note of the Australian situation, question its suitability as a representative of the industry in discussions with the government.

1981: Roger Donaldson

Director of Sleeping Dogs (1970), Smash Palace (1976) and The Beauty (1984) talking just before the New Zealand release of Smash Palace.

"You're trying to release a movie in a market that is very competitive people pay their three bucks to go to the movies, and they expect to see stuff that's comparable to the best American. That's — whatever — movies. If you can't deliver that. When in terms of the special effects, you're at least got to deliver something that gets them going — something that's comparable to some way or another. *Sleeping Dogs* did that, I think."



Criticism or not, the Commission has been reasonably successful in reproducing the films that have been made in New Zealand on a world scale. Before the emergence of a couple of local film

"What's happened in New Zealand is that, over the years, a couple of people have surfaced and made some films, but they didn't really capture the public's imagination. With the advent of television and soap opera, people came to accept that you could keep your own account spoken, and you didn't come with entertainment and sit on the floor. They really did come and do on the floor at John O'Shea's movies."

"It's very difficult to talk about the future of any film industry, because the only one that's really guaranteed to be continuing for most time is the American one. But there are a number of people here who are giving the reputation to do it half the time. I think the most important work at the moment must be spent on foreign projects. There's a lot of people trained up to do the job and, if we're lucky, we might just be able to keep making them."

"For myself, I'm quite committed to the New Zealand film industry. Well, I'm committed to any new movie, really the New Zealand film industry is something that's just happened. There are real advantages here, though. *Smash Palace* is my movie, and I couldn't have made it anywhere else. I definitely have more chance to appear in movies here in New Zealand, I'd be just another local director."

An unlikely alliance between *Rocky 7* (John) and *Rocky 8* (John) is *Rocky 9* (John).



Helen Hunter in the lead role of *Carl & Helen of the High Country*, a Hamilton production co-produced by Wayne Thomas and New Zealand's Pacific Filmunit.

front end, rather than wait for the film to go into print or the world film market. This was off-putting, by today's financial management, he stood up to two or even three times the usual investment. Like BBA, the legislation which made this possible was adopted from other areas of high-risk investment. And, although a controversy had the effect it was designed to have — it created a film industry, jobs and an auxiliary supply industry — a *film's* (like, say, a few fast-food) have much to show for themselves. An industry has become a theme in the industry's role in New Zealand, as in Australia, cultural segregation out completely late on with fiscal pressure. And, although the film industry's overall marketing record was impressive and its international image-building role invaluable, the (first) Maudsley government moved to end the tax shelter in its 1982 budget, giving a two-year run-down period. In September 1984 was the deadline. After that date, the tax concessions would no longer apply.

The effect of that deadline has been immediate, whereas this time last year there were eleven feature films in various stages of production or post-production, some (October 1984) only now getting into newsprint, some another due to go later this month and another possible, but by no means certain, in November. As Wellington producer Bruce Gibson says, "I think there might be one or two more in Canada next year, but that'll be it."

Things are not quite as bad as they look, however. This time last year, with the September deadline looming, there was a general air of optimism in the industry. This spring, things look decidedly brighter. And, whereas so one — with the inevitable exception of Geoff Murphy — went to go or hoped attacking the tax concessions for fear that the government would take it all away, now that the government has taken it (almost) all away, there is a kind of relief. "The only good thing about a 100%," says Gibson, "is that you know what the day was and that, after that, you had to sit and wait for it and do something else."

There are also fairly frequent requests that some — though no one can say which — of the 1984 movies shouldn't have been made that this spring (in a textual rather than in a money sense) to make a film. Larry Parr, producer of *Crucial Moments*, *Run and Come a Hot Friday* (as well as *Ridge in November*, the only feature to have been made this year) says it was in the equally positive reaction to the shelter. "As a result of that financial investment climate," he says, "some of us got the opportunity to break up a track record. Money is not so tight as it was, and it's a good thing that's necessary a bad thing, it'll sort out the players from the rags."

To judge by the films that were as shown at Cannes this year, 100 may repay one's hopes. Though Apart from a couple of takes it's a different low-budget movie produced and marketed by Gibbons, the film, *Crucial Moments*, and, appropriately mentioned on the basis that the standard was well up to previous years. Indeed, one of the striking things about the New Zealand film industry is how few films have been made under the tax shelter

1982: John O'Shea

Center New Zealand producer/director and more recently producer of *Paradise Afternoon*. Among the Gibsons (1984) and *Lower Air* (1985), making of the one of the London release of *Paradise*.

"I was extraordinarily fortunate in the way I got started. Nowadays, I would have to go to the film school and start at the bottom and work my way up. As it was, I just moved in to produce and direct a feature, *Paradise Afternoon*. If you were to the film Commission with that film, they'd laugh at you! And, if I'd been given much more money, I wouldn't have known what to do with it. Not that they have that much money these days. I don't know any producer or director in this country who's filling rooms in the sort of vehicle that directors of commercials in London have. Anyway, I believe in personal necessity. It's a great stimulus."

"It's not quite an industry yet, I don't think. Well, it's more of an industry than the English one, but, until it makes a name with itself, it's not really a name. I believe in personal necessity. It's a great stimulus."



continues to be professional visually by appointments which drop out of the place."

"I think the start of the industry was in the early sixties, when the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation decided to get into independent programming. We were in it. Pacific Film made about 20 television programmes with Geoff Brown and Roger Donaldson. The second channel called day. When the Labour government came in and 'shook-up' television, the first thing they did was to transfer the independent film, that started in a different way, that's when Roger went and made *Shogun* things."

marketing component in the past year —

The Gibson Group and the Challenge Film Corporation (the latter formed by ex-Gibson marketing director, Bill Gibson) — a last best the NZFC which has hatched the money owed the world from festival to festival and from market to market. With considerable success, too. Of the nine new films that were taken to Cannes this year, most of them came away with something, capped by the \$2 million plus worth of sales done by *Manter* film, the Larry Parr produced, Bruce Mitchell-directed screen adventure movie. The film film it was actually funded by Challenge should not detract from the NZFC's long-term achievement. It has been remarkably successful at establishing a profile and a presence, thanks to including able publicity Gipsy after other, there are more New Zealand powers at Cannes than there are anywhere else and the definition of New Zealand's (and the world's) film industry is being built. It's a good thing that's necessary a bad thing, it'll sort out the players from the rags."

For the past couple of years, the NZFC has turned up in Cannes with an annual catalogue of new new movies — the film *Shogun* of a last year's one which, much like BBA, allowed investors to take their profit at the

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Power check on the left, 'Moulin' TV on the right: Emma Lawrence in 'The Queen of Hearts'; and, from left, Geoffrey Rush and Richard Roxburgh in 'Jewel of the South' and 'Stone Isles for Tomorrow'.

have simply cranked without him. Even an industry that over the eight years of its existence, has produced more shorts of 58 films (including co-productions not funded by the NZFC), the local feature film has been not much over 10%.

The same new films shown on the market this year — there was no New Zealand film to enter the competition for the Directors' Fortnight — all definitely looked like they ought to have been made. Best of them was *The Queen of Hearts*, starring Emma Lawrence at this year's Melbourne Film Festival and Geoff Murphy's valiantly New Zealand movie before taking off for Hollywood. It is a romantic fiction, a movie in which Emma Lawrence works up to find herself alone in the world, even though she has vanished as a result of a disastrous experience that got

out of hand. It is an interesting premise, but by no means a top-five one. In the film, though, Murphy has performed his duty to combine moments of tender humour with an edge-of-disaster adventure movie. Whereas in *Goodbye Pork Pie*, the jokes and the drama co-existed naturally, and as time the various juggling with humour and the sub-movie's expenditure left many questions as to what they were watching. In *Goodbye Pork Pie*, a serious story of someone's history, in *Queen of Hearts* the more a qualified filmmaker's impression of self-identity — showing in female underwear, making himself present and leaving Chris from an older woman's view up to find himself alone in the world, even though she has vanished as a result of a disastrous experience that got

around half, where he meets up with two main characters (Adrian Knowler and Peter Scallan). Murphy manages to develop whatever relationships he does reasonably fast, but in *Queen of Hearts* it's clearly the work of a movie filmmaker — of someone who cares about his craft and cares what he does with it. But, unlike *King of the Mountains*, it's a whole lot more up with a satisfying adventure film with a good deal of depth to it, and one whose genre and style are not so obvious as to be made for eyes.

This year's other film was an anthology, either *Case a Hot Friday*, from the novel by Ronald Hugh Brien, is a comedy that fills the genre in almost every sense. The directorial debut of Ian Mearns, who was writing for *Shogun*, *Days*, wrote of *Black Palace* and several other films, it looks a couple of years past running a twice scene in a small North Island town in the film. More than any film since *South Island*, it captures the spirit of rural New Zealand, though not as a nostalgic or sentimental way. Mearns's style is definitely a bit over-the-top, perhaps. But it is one thing, reaching to film in the performance of Mearns' character Billy T. James in the *Yarns* Kod, a colorful

house who wears Medusa head clothes, and comic-book Medusa clothes and brings a general south-of-the-border audience in the most beautiful way.

The other five films are more recent films — an area which the New Zealand film industry has served fairly effectively in the past. *Marshall Park's* *Belarus* is the true of nature with a story of educator Leona Anderson-Walker (Emma Dorey) and her struggle to change New Zealand education in the future. *Love All Film*, directed by John Rind, is a heavily study of the relationship between Katherine Mansfield (Lisa Barker) and John Middleton Murry (Simon Ward) as a young man. John Gielgud is in an old role, *Kangaroo*, a gently romantic and moving story about a young doctor's arrival, in a local story that reads well. *Shelter Run* is a sports, nearly unbroken plot movie, from the director of last year's *Conan*. *Bravo Marvaco*, which had the market on the shelves, and *Mr Wong*, a splashy low-budget thriller about a woman who turns a house into a trap, directed by Gaylene Preston, with Heather Bellamy giving an excellent performance in the main role.

But what of the future? Apart from *Bridge to Nowhere*, about a group of young men at the time from Bruce Lawrence as what the symptoms are, "a violent individual" (a role which Lawrence has all but under his own), and *Queen City Ruckus*, directed by its producer, Larry Parr, is an urban social picture. There is nothing much in the films for the big screen. But has got done two of the greatest by way of overseas genre sales. *Bridge to Nowhere*, in fact, "The deal was with Embassy Home Entertainment, for all rights, worldwide for the biggest sum, very low — NZ\$1.1 million, which at the time we did the deal was US\$160,000. *Queen City Ruckus* is a low cost picture, and the budget is going to be about NZ\$20 million. That's US\$1 million, and it's

John, Emma Dorey in the role of Leona, a single about Leona Anderson-Walker, New Zealand's education pioneer.

1983: Geoff Murphy

Director of Wild Man (1977), Goodbye Pork Pie (1981), The Queen of Hearts (1983), and Jewel of the South (1985), writing in Canada where she was an official selection out of competition.

"At the moment, the big Hollywood film tends to be more mainstream, with the big action, no audience manipulation and technique, rather than as far as it's able. I think that's what I try for. So, with *Goodbye Pork Pie*, what I wanted to make was a film that would be very popular — which it was — but which also said things about an individual's reaction to a really overwhelming society, and the desire for them to see that



own path, no matter how absurd it might be. But I didn't want to say that message in huge letters, so that the audience felt it was giving them a lesson. Same with *Wild Man*. People go to a film for some sort of release and entertainment, and I feel an obligation to give them what they go for. The sort of films I most admire are the ones that succeed in doing that without changing the other side of things.

"One thing I feel is that, when you shoot a feature, you're in a much more difficult medium than television. The audience has to invest and put out a lot of money, and pay money out of its pocket, and in the end, find parking space, but they're not. So, you have to offer something that makes it feel it was worthwhile. And, so, that, I feel you have to be prepared to take risks while you're shooting. The concept of doing a production where every decision that you make is safe will finish up as a long sleep.

"Just recently, I think the art world has been going out of fashion. Everyone's been making their money on the way to the movies, not showing the breaks. The producers are treating themselves for fun, there's more money and the crew get paid great money, every body makes their money while the film's made, and then you could put it in the can and bury it and go on a going to be particularly open. The contracts of the workshop have to be like."





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**TELEVISION
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ON THE EDGE

Vincent Ward's *Vigil*, which opens in Australia this month, was the first New Zealand film to be invited to compete at Cannes — quite a tribute for the debut feature by a director still in his twenties, working in a country set well apart from the cinematic centre of things. But, as Tony Mitchell found out, he has turned this isolation firmly to his advantage.

"*Vigil* is the strongest, most personally inspired film to come out of New Zealand to date. It establishes in a single blow the place of an outsider, 27-year-old Vincent Ward, as a unique film talent." So declared *Playboy* in May 1984, on the eve of *Vigil*'s appearance at Cannes, as the first New Zealand film to be accepted into competition.

"It will not be an overnight commercial blockbuster in cinemas throughout the world," *Playboy* went on to write somewhat prophetically, "but it seems destined to do strong business on the increasingly lucrative art film circuit." More than a year later, *Vigil* is finally being commercially released in Australia — by Ronin Films — having picked up an impressive list of screenings throughout Europe, Canada and the UK. Audiences at the Pruden Festival in Vancouver's most popular film area, at last year's Sydney Film Festival, it came eighth in the audience poll — no mean achievement in view of the traditional Australian preference towards its supposedly underdeveloped neighbour.

Vincent Ward is an intense, restless storyteller, who turns strands of thought distilled in meditation to poems, a visionary poet, and is then prone to leap back to tie up the loose ends. His careful passage of the right way to express a particular idea is also a desirable feature of his films. *Vigil* is in fact his third, if you count the 12-minute *State of Siege*, based on a novel by Juan Rulfo, which he made when he was 25, and *In Spring One Flower Alone*, a 40-minute documentary about an old Maori woman's life with her mentally retarded son, made two years later.



Along with *Playboy*, *Time* (*Ward* kept the day before *Vigil*), *Rolling Stone* and *the New York Times* were among the first to praise the work of the son of *Vigil*.



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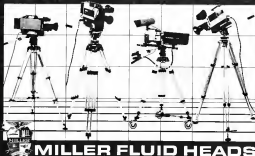
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NEVER MIND THE G FEEL THE WIDTH

The people who set up New Zealand television had one overriding priority in mind: coverage. What concerned them was not what the new medium showed, but how cheap people it reached. Viewers, after all, are the voters. And that, more than anything else, explains why New Zealand television, while boasting a respectable tradition of home produced programming, once in the field of drama, was relatively ill-served — especially in films — and has been in trouble ever since.

Throughout its first 25 years, television has steadily obeyed the polarisation principle: that the signal — first one channel, then two state-run networks — should reach every last remote rock and cranny of a country that is a geographical nightmare for television transmission engineers. The result? 99.9% of the New Zealand population can receive TV1, with only 5% fewer in tune of TV2. Even after 31 years, AM radio still reaches only 98% of the population.

For this to work, the television system requires about 500 transmitters, engineers and translators for each network, with some of the translators serving no more than half a dozen households. They provide the kind of nationwide coverage that the Australian postbox counterparts of New Zealand's wireless farmers will not find at such vast cost, when the Australo-galactic islands have had a surplus of them within range of the ABC's homebased newspaper TV service.

Coverage, then, rather than choice has been the difference in programs between the television system on either side of the Tasman. Only now are the major metropolitan communities in New Zealand coming within range of a third, privately owned network — although these

populations, numbers could probably have supported several years ago. But, when the Māori are banded out for that third private network, it will be required to go on its advertising to reach 90% of the population within its first two years, and must endeavour to displace that rural dwellers should not be left behind.

Such universal coverage is a tradition as old as the nation. But the first quarter century of New Zealand has continually demonstrated how attempts to reach programming to every last cranny have been thwarted by demands for coverage. And, whenever the political struggle has been unpropitiously overcome, more television has been established by statute as the polarisation of the nation's communications to universalize the system.

First, from 1958 to 1962, it was the New Zealand Broadcasting Service, a government department that was followed by the purposefully ambiguous New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation, with its single-channel monopoly. This service lasted over a decade, making what is a 1975 decision (which took two years to implement) to split the NZBC into three separate corporations, one for state radio, one for the new soon to be flying free in the ABC, Geoffrey Whitcombe's, new look Television One, and a fledgling second network, TV2, later called South Pacific Television.

This system, however, was given little more than a year to bloom. With the stroke of the Muldoon government, the three corporations were merged back into state and a new version of the NZBC, called (and quite unambiguously) the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand. Television One and South Pacific Television were, however, allowed to continue as separate, competing legal entities.

Even this experiment of the 1973 radio-TV split has long been, however, with all kinds of fading under pressure. Muldoon later the TV license fee paid for all six channels in 1975 took, and television ended its contribution to NZBC's coffers from the traditional 50% of revenue, to a 1981 figure of 15%. So, in 1979, to reverse the substantial commercial operation between Television One and South Pacific Television, the board passed NZBC's decision to amalgamate the two networks into the general Television New Zealand, which runs its so-called commercial two-network system. This decision was probably the most successful of all the rearranging, since it lifted both together together almost whole for five years, and compared against one another, and its operations can still be traced in TVNZ air years on.

Polynesia, in other words, took its toll right from the start. After setting up studios in the four main centres of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin between 1960 and 1962, the television NZBC, then until the end of 1969 before it folded into separate systems into a network, and just only for a slightly increased and a two-monthly current affairs programme. Not until 1975, on the eve of the changeover to colour transmission, did the NZBC finally network the whole of its transmission, making a system that of four 4 programmes in 1975 in Wellington one night, a week later in Auckland and a week later still in Christchurch and Dunedin. Viewers in the far south (who saw an episode of *Pepper Pig*) or whatever two weeks after those in the north. All the while, however, the transmission got further

A House of History for TVNZ? Mike Adams (centre, front) and Muldoon (right, front) with a group of Ministers in the Government

QUALITY,

New Zealand — Television

This year, New Zealand celebrates 25 years of television — which, in effect, means 25 years of 'Television New Zealand', the state-run network which has been through a bewildering variety of organisational changes. Warren Maine looks back over the first quarter-century of Kiwi TV, particularly at its drama output, which had its golden age in the late seventies, and looks at the imminent arrival of private broadcasting on the other side of the Tasman.



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the story filled with some of the ideas that were going through his head at the time. "For me," he says, "the plot is a shell in which the human beings — the characters — live. Allen Bakula, I'd just been doing what everyone does — living one's life, getting up in the morning, washing, fully. And I'd been thinking about in spirit of the Soviet conference — about how little we know about each other. Ingulf is almost convinced that pie and the wife are perfectly. I think books and things are just a shell for what our flesh could be in a given state. You know, you tell us love, and you find that everything you need is about failing to love. Ingulf is almost an idea. I thought I could use I think to something, and I think it's something. And, indeed to that, there was my idea that I think we're all confused by that identity again today. We see something and, because we can identify it, we immediately think that's what it is."

"I wanted to take big figures, Rutger Hauer is a big actor, Gene Hackman is a big man, Theresa Russell is a big woman"

But no one knows anything completely about anyone the 3's like the lower, cerebral, cerebral. "What are you thinking about?" I'm thinking about you, thinking. What are you thinking about?" I'm thinking about you, too. No one really knows anyone else."

Gene Hackman and Theresa Russell in a moment of intimacy in *Crash*. Prior the director King on the set of *Red Wings*

In Ingulf's case, each of the characters is really almost like a major cultural figure of the postwar period — with Marjorie Monahan and Albert Einstein, Senator Joe McCarthy and Joe DiMaggio. But we don't know them, and they don't know each other. Only at the end of the film do they really know themselves. At last, each character has or has identity like a cannon, suffering something profound and "knowing" back to the others and so on. And that, though, the real point is created and really done — a good behind the work of the public arena like R. D. Laing's *On the Word "Garden"*. King there is a reserved theme in King's film, and that program is that is a great knowledge of himself is self-knowledge that recognizes the elements. But, despite all the ideas, he likes to basically show character — show people. In *Red Wings*, Chas (James Fox), Turner (Mick Jagger) and Phoebe (Anne Parilla) are three of alienated people together with catastrophic results in the heart of the heart. In *Red Wings*, the first (Gene Hackman) the boy (Gene Hackman) and the teenage (David Gulpilil) are three lonely cultural characters — three young men on which race and gender lines already shaped deep marks — in the social being of the culture. Theresa Russell's Newline has taken so much on a strange place. Above all, the ritual couple which King in King's film, early set in the land of the future of human existence at the point of most

appears together. Nothing could make this more than the scene as *Red's* Look Now, in which John and Laura Baxter (Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie) are making love, and King would show all their dirty dancing for dance. Their bodies are performing but they — their souls — are elsewhere. In King's film — and certainly in light, that is *Red Wings* — the clear the center, the more pervasive the alienation.

Ingulf's case, too, is about that, though it is not about sex. King sees the connection between the future (Theresa Russell) and the past (Gene Hackman) about ending their marriage, in which the need to prove their identities and his with love and security, and with a mistaken desire to "prove" the other. "Even if you're a religious relationship," says King, "it's a big thing to see unhappiness again. There's a point in their lives which probably begins with the shock of 'Do you want to end it? Shall we get a divorce?' And he says, 'Yes.' Although she's said him on to it, it's like jumping into the unknown for her. Yes, I called a longer. We go to the 'wedding' too, things are getting closer to her. And she says, 'I want to go to the bathroom.' You know, you have an experience of happiness and unhappiness. But they're sure, and we can't let go. To get me was even closer of happiness to support what you think is someone else's happiness is as much as our own lives and so there. You wouldn't do it to their unhappiness."

For all its passion and unhappiness, though, Ingulf's case has the structure of a fine, purple coat and so from the last between the clockwork movement, possibly causing a mistake, taking in the bathroom, or taking in on each other in the wrong moment, after explaining the scene to the Professor (Michael Smith), the actress (Julie Christie) and the director (Gene Hackman) show him his legs, embarrassed, he does so. And in comes the Ingulf's case. "For me," says King, "the theme of Ingulf's case is that it is a false tragedy, a false story, and that comes from the fact that they are, at either end of the spectrum, in between."

"That's what I do: I make films. What would I do if I didn't?"

King's last, comedy and domestic films and stories usually like in *Crash* and his face and energy."

When there was other love film, Ingulf's case is about coming to know, not by compromise, but by accepting one's ownness and one's real identity — by rejecting the one's ownness which should one's own knowledge "in the future" to be. "It's about the happiness in almost every human being. There's a constant which, in a thinking film, you have the answer in everything. You may be going against it as a film or anything — but it comes. And, in it comes, it goes. I remember one of my first visits to me and saying, 'I had the most one's ordinary thing, happen in my childhood, I seemed to have suddenly everything about school and I can't remember what it was?' It goes. And that moment brings you realizing that you're doing — that, for the first time, you truly can't explain yourself. That's when you become an adult."★



AUSTRALIAN FILM COMMISSION

FILM DEVELOPMENT DIVISION — SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDING PROGRAM

The Australian Film Commission provides limited funds for special purpose grants, investments and loans to qualified practitioners in film and video in Australia.

Preference will be given to those activities which are of significant benefit to the film and video community. The AFC also expects that, where appropriate, complementary funding support will be provided by state governments and the private sector.

The AFC now invites applications for activities in the following categories scheduled to commence during the period January 1-June 30, 1985.

The form of funding, whether by way of grant, loan or investment, will be at the AFC's discretion.

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- a) The research and writing of critical works on subjects related to the cultural and aesthetic aspects of film and video. Publishing subsidies are not available in this category.
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Festivals, awards, seminars, conferences etc. with the following objectives:

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Please note: the deadline for applications for activities commencing during the period 1 July to 31 December 1985 is 31 March, 1986.

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May-June 1985

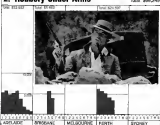
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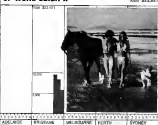
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Week 6	2-8 June
Week 7	9-15 June
Week 8	16-22 June
Week 9	23-29 June

Australia's Top Three Grossers for May-June 1985



With Australian box office in general very much up and down over the past few months, the careers of the latest Australian-made feature have been equally patchy. At least, however, they have been more than one film to talk about. We start the tour in our last issue.

Watch April's *Love August* film. **Suburbia Under Arms** is still on the books in May/June, continuing its moderately successful run in Adelaide — to home theatres — and Perth. It also had a brief career up north in Brisbane where it pulled a fairly strong \$180,000 — not a great deal more than the weekly ticket for that old Oz use that **World Safari** — which the Queensland is made of weeks later.

Chick's wander among the local movies revolves, as **An Inherent Obsession** which overtake — or more precisely ground — a batch of fielded movies to do well over a hundred grade's worth of business in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. Its release was clearly timed to coincide with the much-typed publication of Mr. McCab's latest interventionist back-buster: *A Good for the Bad*. Mr. McCab, which was famous not only as a teenage classical subterfuge and a turn to be

Not that *Reiki* has been a stunner in the box office by people wishing to use the film version of *McGillough's* *Praxis* psychic aid, says. But the opening week business was far in *Reiki*: good a late start and particularly expensive in Spain. As producers have been able to note in the past, *Reiki* can be a sure to coincide with all the box office.

The only real problem to emerge from this year's box office, so far, is the affluence overstates preferences at the different stage capitals. In Sydney, they were quite kind to *The Countess of Drift* and clearly seemed to *An Inland Obsession* while Adelaide seemed loyal to *Falkenberg Under Arms* and Perth went in their way. Nothing of it is easy *Waltz Before a Sunset* it is being even kinder than Adelaide to *Falkenberg*.

5/2' while the figures for **An Independent Observation** — or for that matter **World Safari II** for January-February, Australia (and/or) — look OK on their own, they pale a little when set against the figures for the major American hits of the same period.

Discussion A May-June total of 2111.883 ft³ of Aqueduct Millstone and Spring is being confined, amounting to **Severely High Coal** is a subsurface layer of 881.2 ft³.

be the first week at 100, which was the fourth week, and

The 1986 Murphy vehicle, which opened in the second week in July and was designed to keep ahead of its main rival, **Police Academy 3: Their First Assignment**, on a nationwide basis for all but one of the weeks in question. Its figure had slumped throughout the period, only beginning to taper slowly off towards the end of August.

The other top picture had three very strong weeks at the start of its lifecycle — from 1 to 25 May — then dropped down to a rational figure of \$450 per lb to its fourth week end. By week 6, it was down (again) the \$250 per lb mark, with a total of \$100,750.

Conspicuously, the natural price, the third highest-growing foreign firm had a distinct Australian flavour: Peter Wara, a **WELLES** which opened with a bid 3,787,500 but spent the rest of May and June well below the \$200,000 mark. Week 6 was its best, with \$252,500 (marginally) but week 7 was still only a few bucks below that figure, with \$245,500.

Agilent Sales from three brick-and-mortar offices in May-June soared 14% from last year, helped by four healthy quarters from the previous months. *The Newswatcher*

Slavery which Australia has taken to heart, and which has been spawning class since Christmas. **Amnesia**, whose warlike passions has been inflamed downward, and two flags of the current. **British** **revel**. **A Passage to India** and **The Killing**. **Blade**, **light** of which, **seeing** in the end.

Other moves that have had strong springs—\$30,000 a year in Melbourne and Sydney—on Steamers with a full week of \$141-143, the Greek ship *Canaris* of Chicago with \$77,128, *Germana* of Baltimore 2 with \$75,200, *The Falcon* and the *Starline* with just a somewhat antedated spring, did opened with \$67,480, the *North Atlantic* (New York) with \$66,970 and *East-wards* (New York) and *The Company of Women* (New York) of the last two, it is interesting to note, did anything like the business they did in the States and, in the case of the last, it was a very small one.

Hot Max. Beyond *Thunderdome*, which opened on 8 August, do the impact front the biggest risk for being *Disasterously Sweeping Storms* and, above all, *Flaming, Dirty Sign-off* that it.

Film Australia

So many people came out of Film Australia — that makes it sound like a prison — but it seemed so quiet, quiet. I was not conscious of the length of time I was there, because of the wide variety of work, and Film Australia seemed to be the only place that had the budget to make a good film that was a noncommercial proposition. It did all commercial research, all work with people like Carl Schultz, Ken Cammish, Ken Huxford, Don Campbell, Arch Nicholson... it was a wonderful training ground. And there was a lot of guys who were all very good, trained cameramen — Mike Tomkinson, Kerry Brown, Andy Fraser and Ross King, if they had been in the commercial world outside, doing feature or commercials, they would have been successful.

Documentaries

I just recently did some documentary stuff which was the first time for a hell of a while. I found that it was like I had all my wings clipped for three or four years and then given freedom again. It was with Phil Collins and J.C. V. documentary on his tour of Australia and Japan. To have a camera on my shoulder again and not to have to light anything because of high speed action and super speed lenses, and just follow the man and his band and film around all over the country — dark, light, shade, inside, outside, upside down, anywhere... it was just liberating. That's right, it's upside down and become part of it, but technically there is no style in it. There is something happening in front of you that is only going to happen once and you have to capture it.

I don't know that the cameramen I've done have been an influence on the way I've photographed the last 10 years, so it has been a little bit of doing it very often, I don't have the experience of being brought up doing commercials where all the tricks are pulled out. A lot of the cameramen doing features were using those techniques but making every decision to be commercial a special one. In a documentary, you don't do that.

First meetings with Mad Max

While I was on *Hoodwink*, I got a call about doing *Mad Max 2*. I didn't know anything about the first *Mad Max*, so I went and saw it. I thought it was reasonable, so I met George Miller and Byron (Kronau) at an office in the city I thought, "Wow! These guys look pretty good!" George had a little bow tie on, and Byron was all dressed up. So I said, "Yes, I'll do it."

With *Mad Max 2*, George was very specific with his shots, because he'd learned on *Mad Max* what cars and what doesn't. I remember suggesting a wonderful shot to George of a car flying through the air; it would have looked great. But George said, "It's not cut!" I said, "What do you mean?" It's a great shot, it's cut! And remember this according to me the left of the screen and the right of the screen, and how the shot was to be a second long, and the shot before was

half-a-second long and, in the action, your eyes were on the left hand side of the screen. By the time people had reacted in the change of shot and got their eyes across to the other side of the screen, the shot would be over. So instead how good the shot was, it was never going to work.

George's cuts are really quick, so every shot had to have good dynamics and good perspective. If you didn't stuff away in a close picture, it shows a frame. That means wide angle work — so fairly close, with wide lenses mounted on the vehicles or on tracking vehicles to get visual pace and speed.

On *Mad Max 2*, George very much controlled the placement of the camera, even to multi-camera set-ups. We would shoot a camera a dozen counts to get it stable. We'd put it in one place, lay up the vehicles, then move it a bit to the left, a bit to the right, a bit to the, down a bit, back a bit, in a bit, and make little jump cut back where we started. But it's that attention to detail that makes the film what it is.

Shooting Thunderdome in the desert

In *Beyond Thunderdome*, the desert landscapes are very stark. They were shot outside Cooper's Pedy — very amazing country. We were shooting there in temperatures of 48 and 50 degrees Celsius. It was difficult enough to look after the equipment in that heat; the temperature in the camera was 25 degrees! Difficult for us, but even more difficult for the performers — Tom in his chessmill, for example.

We also shot at Koorind, which is a beautiful area of short country. On one of our first days shooting there, a building wind storm came up. We could hardly stand up and the camera was completely washed out with sand. We only got half-a-dozen shots during the period, but they are in the film and they look fantastic.

Another phenomenon that appears in the film was a dust storm at Cooper's Pedy. It was three or four miles high and 30 miles wide. We saw it coming when we were shooting terrain with the helicopter of the little airplane we had for the picture. To get them safely back to base, we sent them off; and Richard (Morgan) took the camera and traveled back with Terry Lee, who is the best chopper pilot for Easing. What they got was absolutely fantastic: the aeroplane was a tiny dot against this immense red dust storm rolling across the plain.

Lighting Thunderdome

Thunderdome was a big job with power into all the buildings, including Tina's penthouse, which was 30 feet in the air. It was about two-thirds scale, and the interior was built in the Century Theatre at the Sydney Showgrounds. The design was beautiful — a five-sided thing — and I fell into a bit of a trap, because I'd ordered light was in the central penthouse. It was all accounted with access, and I put cranes outside of that and in there with arcs, three with the right light, I was shooting almost mid-air, so high-speed stock was in. It was a beautiful set, light, and I kept the colour very cool in there.

It was also great having so many faces to light. Time is a beautiful lady with this very tricky quality, and Mil works under any light; you can put under a fluoro and he looks a million dollars.

The Clock in the Dark had a special look, because of the set itself; the left a bit of dark shadows underneath the faces. There was the undermoon when the stars were, which I wanted to keep low-key and moody. It was lit with some very dark one-foot narrow spots mounted four feet in the air, plus some practicals, and that was it, just touching up some of the close-ups.

Initially one of the biggest light set-ups was on the model suit of devastated Sydney at the end of the picture. Again we had night arcs and we did the big model-looking lighting on the pastel background, because we were shooting in 40 to 60 frames and stopping right down to 1/16 at 1/22 to make it look realistic.

We did a travelling shot, which I'm not sure has made it into the final cut, but the model buildings were about

in 1993, when Australian television was four years old, Dean Semler was seventeen and just starting work as a props boy at the Channel 9 studios in Adelaide. 25 years later, he qualifies as a member of the Television Pioneers, a group of TV industry people with that length of service. He is also one of our top directors of photography. Since his first feature film, *Lyn the Balloon Go* (1975), made when he was at Film Australia, his big-screen work has included *Hoodwink*, *Mad Max 2*, *Kitty and the Bagman*, *Undercover*, *Razzerback*, *The Coca-Cola Kid* and *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome*. Fred

Harrison spoke with him in Sydney on the eve of the premiere of *Thunderdome*.



Filmmaking with a bang: the efforts put up in *Mad Max 2* — not the sort of shot of which you get a second go

DEAN SEMLER'S DESERT SONGS

fillets to twenty feet deep and about five or six feet high. We moved a track from one end, and deeply across from us was an arc rising into the trees. It was pulled down to look very good. We filled the place up with tracks and, as we started to back to another firing, I moved the arc across as well, which gives the fantastic perspective like when you're traveling in a car and the arc moves with you. It gave a enormous depth.

Stamps

You have to be very bold in photographing a person like *Mud Man*. When some people are acting strangely, they're usually shy, but they're usually still steady. It's like a piece of fruit that will drop if it's not picked at the right time. Or, if it's picked early, it's not ready. If you have to change the operator on all four cameras, you are going to blow the shot. It changes the moment and possibly makes it more dangerous, so you can't worry about opening up half a stop on one camera or a third of a stop on another; you have to go with it.

On the Maui Mass line, we had what we call a "Not Kelly" — a kila, hand-forged Aerflex camera built into a quarter-inch magazine housing, and we put this camera down class to inspect on a film. It took a few bits of string, you had to roll it on Maadings, some it said and lock it off, because the lid had to come off if you wanted to adjust the aperture or the focus or the speed. It was normally with a flash

In *Mad Man 2*, when the tanker is driving down the hill and the car was still stationary in the middle of the road with nobody in it, the tanker drove down at maybe 40 or 50 m.p.h. to bump on the car, which had been

because in *Mad Max 2* we shot in black, light, floodlight, side light, with no continuity of lighting. In a chase sequence where you have developed to much energy and excitement, if there's a place that's a second-and-a-half' long with a grey sky behind it, you'll sever any tie the audience has with it closed.

Care and shines

In Krasnodar, most of the staff of Pudu Miners in the car wasn't on location, but was stuck in Mordov Agnate, black drapes. There is even a story where a couple, because I can't see a street, they're stuck in the car. I was out of the car, there was a great emotion and dust, and there was a lot of movement of the camera: a very aggressive, if I heard from Mordov Agnate, then there is an art in simulated chaos. I was very close to the camera, because never being still about how much you move the camera. On May, I would be watching the camera on the third floor and wouldn't come up to the second floor to see the work of the camera. In motion, it would add enormous energy to the house. There were some of these shots that they even didn't move steadily to appreciate the job.

There was some stuff we shot hanging on in the front of the tanker in Mex. The prop had built a handle for the camera, and I was trying to hold me eye to the floating arm. In the end I closed the eye piece and put a steel in. It was crunched on tightly, but I said to George, "I'm not sure if you've got anything, but there may be an exciting moment." Sure enough, the movement of the cables was so violent, you might only have had ten frames that were registered, but you wouldn't put it any other way.

Synopsis

Undercover was a pretty snaky picture, considering there was no real motivation for the snake to be around. I like many snakes because it is a multi-layered film. Different in a lot of different times. Snake gives you many dimensions of the issue.

After Underneath, I said I wasn't going to use smoke on my next picture. But that was **Kamachick**, and there's more smoke on that than you've ever seen! So, after **Kamachick**, I resolved not to use smoke or flashlight, and my fix was to shoot in something different. Then **Underneath** ends up with heaps of smoke on it.

In Thruhardome we had a special travelling jacket machine on wheels that was designed by the guy who taught me how to film 15 years ago, Evan Boring, who now designs coats and jacket vehicles.

He designed this along with two Holden engines on the back of the old truck, with two fans mounted on them. You could swirl them around with switches connected to them or feed that gas there — whatever you like. He filled a valley in South Australia for the flying of **Hobbsley** **Under Arms** and it took half an hour for it to clear! He's a brilliant engineer and one of Australia's true geniuses.

Undercover

I honestly don't remember talking to David Stevens about a style on Undercover. But David was very specific about his theory: he works all of his

except out at minerals with the
iron. And they all fit into the sea
spot that is there.

The locations as they were haunted, and the men were famous. I worked with an insurance salesman and a focus puller called Stephen Debono, who was really — absolutely ready — to go out there and stuff himself. He was a very keen, very talented young focus puller. He had some cameras that he used to pull and see

"When stunt people are psyched up and absolutely ready, it's like a piece of fruit that will drop if it's not picked at the right time."

de skills and play around with. I did some tests on them and a flunked up on what the whole pattern with them. They were called "the CIO T" — the Christian Dior T. It would have been quite appropriate if they had been Dior's stockings, but the cilds was beautiful and they worked superbly (except the whole pattern).

I also tried not to work at great spaces, like 1.8, 1.31, 1.16, 1.22 and stuff like that. Even on the extreme low end, we had the bright old hot Australian sun, so we were shooting at 1.8 on *Anamorphic*, in *Daylight*, which was beautiful. It gave us a long separation between foreground and background and, with the rackfocus, the backgrounds were like panel paintings, which was a lovely scenario. The late was very soft.

Russell Mincaby and
Razouback

I remember that Melbourn was talking about *Reinhardt* when we were doing *Boys to Etc.* I got a call from him one day saying, "Are you interested?" So I met him the young guy, and he was a little bit of a dandy, but I told him I was into him and he said, "I'd read, and we're a helluva good team from the way you do it, a somebody to make — a little bit bold, at times. He taught me that a few people that is not necessary to be under the ground, half-on-the-edge where the ground is really much better. There is an enormous difference. So you'd better you out a camera in a hole and a world."

If the film looked good, you made a look better and a looked Thelma, and then Russell went happy. The next day, he and I went to the location survey of a cave at Wheat Creek, because the two locations in the film lived in a cave. There were some limestone, which was hard to find. Russell said, "I don't want to go to a cave." And he said, "We'll have to look at it as a cave." It seemed an incredible waste of money, but they built this cave. It was a brilliant piece of art design. That then lived in a conventional cave, which I think any other director might have in their cave. It was a cave. Russell had a cave built that was 300 feet long and 60 feet high, with ramps. It was built with arcs on the perimeter, with a great looking interior. It was a great looking interior.

George was the driver. It worked very well. It was just going at extra drop out of concern, and Russell did that all

I was going to do this **Highlander** thing with hip. It's a beautiful story set in two periods — the 1800s in the highlands of Scotland and contemporary Manhattan. We imagined and did drink with producers and agents and people over there. It was a big job — six months in London, with fairly big pre-production. So, we packed up home and my daughter was taken out of school and we arranged for correspondence lessons for that length of time.

But poor Danny, we hadn't signed a contract! We were in the middle of America somewhere, and I got a call saying, "You can't bring your guitar over because there is a union problem." That was very disappointing, because Johnny Horton and I had worked closely together for five or six years.

Well, I was asked to go over and do a survey interview, in the mountains because we might be able to get a few while I was there, there were two to three times meetings in London and, on each occasion, I was invited back. At the same time, another guy, Marianne Oudrieh, the Czechoslovakian communist who shot *Amadeus*, was trying to get in to do Hugh Hudson's next picture, *Revolution*. He didn't get it, either. The rest of us went home with our tails between our legs.

Foreigners working here
and Australians working
there

With *Highlander*, the English people said, "We try to work in Australia and can't." So, I mean, what do you do? They're providing things and we're protecting ours. I think it's a pity you can't be shared a bit — that we can't be a serious student of people in, like, what is Cambodia or special efforts elsewhere — people that we could learn from.

We had an American special officer (no. Mike Wood, here for Eisenhower), whom I got fairly close to. Just none of the tiny things he does every

"On Max, I would be wobbling the camera on the fluid head and George would come up and kick the tripod and whack the side of the camera. In rushes, it would add enormous energy to the scene."

work over days that we haven't been exposed to... [measuring, money-saving] very productive stuff. He'd come up with materials that we hadn't used that are readily available here, but they're not being used for that

He did things like *Psalms*, which he got an Academy nomination for, and *Runaway Train*, and the *Amos* stuff on Indian Jews. People like that you should be in. And it would be nice to get in American companies.

specially cut apart by the special effects guy so it would fall into a million pieces. We had a Ned Kelly act shoot 20 yards down the road, looking at the impact, which was a famous shot.

Unfortunately, the chutes seemed stuck at first, when it was by the crack, it came in, an absolute straight line at the Ned Kofehl in the middle, you can see it coming straight towards the lens and their smashing. The Ned Kofehl was in a closed farm as there was a fence in front of him, but he, it was on the far side a football, and rolled with the camera in it. The history lead was covered, as the film stopped, it rolled down the hill into the bush, and the guys ran down and got it. The shot was strived right up to the end of the film, it was a very good shot. Colburn was whispering random and said, "Oh, come on driving, more stupid." Then the guys came up and he checked behind his seat, it was so real it's hard to see why you don't

Byron used to say that, in a storm, you can put anything together that has been shot at any time of day under any weather — running, handover, whatever. He was absolutely right.



er an English accent when work arrives. It would be nice for the postscript — music, grips and everybody else — to express that. The problem is, how many, and who decides?

I find a lot of the reactions very negative. I just like to get on with it and get it done. I'd like to shoot the European system, where you start at 11 o'clock in the morning and have a really nice lunch and a glass of wine, and then you shoot through to night at night. Peter Jackson on *Heavenly Creatures* would be strong enough writing for the sun to come up or something to happen and, just as you were ready, someone would come out and call "For breakfast" and you'd miss out on the time anyway, everybody would rush off to the table to get the bacon rolls. I can remember turning around and seeing Russell standing there thinking, "What the hell is going on, you know, when we're trying to make a meal?" He squeals on a rack-dip system, where you shoot 30 hours straight and you get everything done. It's high energy, and everyone lives it.

His American work twelve hours straight. The real dose is a picture in Singapore for Columbia Television called *Passion Flower*, with Bruce Scudamore, and directed by Joe Sarno, who's got a track record a mile long. It was thirteen one-hour episodes and a budget of something like \$40 million — enormous. We shot for five weeks in Singapore, and pulled out four days early, but they were modest work, with twelve-hour days, plus travel and outfit — the first one I'd done. They were very dramatic, particularly in the Singapore heat.

When we first got over there, there was a very definite feeling from the Americans that they were the film-

Don't touch! They're on air with Joseph Sarno and finally getting his APD award on American film life. Anne and George Miller.

makers and we were something unknown. They were ring back saying they want to do another one in Tahiti, but we're all booked up.

I think our top Australian crew are more relaxed. It did a show in England recently — a commercial for American cigarettes — and I wasn't quite sure what I had to say to whom, because you were always stopping on some body's legs. Whereas over here you can say, "Gutter, sport, I need that over here," and they'll say, "Oh, so are you busy, that's his job?" And people sort of chip at him and help each other out. If you ask a grip to move a light a inch for you, he will but if I had a light moved in England by any other means but the person who was supposed to have moved it, I would have been in more trouble than a virgin in a brother's prison.

Future plans

I've just bought the rights to a book that I'm going to turn into a feature film, writing a script in the meantime, and it seems to start and shoot a myself. To me, it's the most important thing that's happened in my career, and it's happened at exactly the right time. I'd come back from what I thought was going to be a wonderful opportunity to shoot a picture overseas, which turned out to be a fairly bitter experience, and a hurt.

When I got back, there was a letter on my doorstep from my mother with a little dipping. My mother lives on the river Murray in South Australia. She

said she's dipping again. "Pardon to be made into a film." My mum picked up and I read a simple little story in the local paper saying that a local policeman had written a book about an old bush legend in Kooragang, the town where I was born. His book had sold thousands of copies and, as a result, he'd had offers from people to make a film of it. I thought I'd better pre-empt a thing, because I'm a professional human being. I was a kid. He's got a man in his late sixties, and I sang up the police station and the post office to get his number. I said, "Mr. Jones? It's Don Scudamore here. I used to live in 19th Street, just opposite the railway station, and I remember you." And he said, "Ah, yeah?" And I said, "I'm in the film business now and I've made a

"Russell taught me that a low-angle shot is not necessarily six inches above the ground: half-an-inch above the ground is really much better. So you dig holes!"

few films, and I've heard you've had a few offers for filming the *Passion story*." He said, "Yeah, yeah, there's about half a dozen. I really don't know what to do."

Next thing, Anne and I were over there, spent a day or two with Max on the river and bought the rights to his book, so now the film is a beautiful story and the writing is at the moment. The first time I got between

shooting I got pen to paper — Sunday, normally. I put in one to twelve hours on a Sunday, I'm a third of the way through the draft, and it's looking pretty good at the moment, although I've never written anything before. I was going to get a writer in, but it's a bit so personal. I've got used to it, because I know all the people in his books, I know the area, and I know the story of this old house. So I've got to do it. I'm writing as pressure — in fact I can't write a word at this way.

I'm doing Carl Schultz's next picture, a thing called *The Trailblazer*, at late September, for PBS. It's a terrific script. I came home on Sunday night, having shot all week, and on Sunday night you get home and usually drag. I thought "I'll have a truck load of this, because I have to read it over the weekend." I packed it up, and I'd read it before dawn. I fell asleep at the time. It's so funny as hell. So that's going to be next. And then, next year, I'm doing George Ogden's picture — a thing called *The Sea-Eds* — in January or February.

We're looking at using SuperTechnique for *The Trailblazer* — that's the reason that that *Groenland* is. There will be a picture that out here that they're very good. It's not. There are about a dozen features in the States that are being shot that way, which is the first time that there has been any real alternative to Paramount. A picture can be shot with opticals, lenses, and the full-size gas mask is dropped to a \$350 rate and blown up to an anastigmatic supered print and projected anastigmatic. There are some advantages and some disadvantages. The Paramounts are a very good, but this is something new which would be interesting for me to try. ★

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Book Reviews

The business of film

**RKO — THE BIGGEST
LITTLE MAJOR OF THEM
ALL** by Betty Litsky (Pinnacle
Hb. 1984, \$27.95 ISBN 0 13
761451 8)

Until very recently, histories of Hollywood have been written from the position of a fan or student of a star in the studio. One history of American film, after another, has treated the cinema industry as a matter of celebrity — as the sum total of its product — rather than by looking closely at the intricate industrial processes that led to the creation of the product.

Those who have looked behind the green haze by and large consider themselves with the safe turf of topography notwithstanding quagmire of business. In the aftermath of centuries of slavery, crime and history, it is easier to see Louis B. Mayer as MGM, Harry Cohn as Columbia or James Cagney as Warner Bros.

Even such notorious SFers as Stephen G. Kory, chairman of both *The Parents' Gone Awol* and his recent Thames Television series *Hollywood*, have done the same.

The result of all this is that this great stretch of Hollywood — from a collection of modest sets to movie studios — has become a production location for one of the most successful TV series since *Gunsmoke*. And the movie location that is supposed to be the home of the *Gunsmoke* series is the *Gunsmoke* series' home.

Little MGM Warner, Fox, Universal, Paramount or Columbia RKO was not founded by some immigrant mogul, nor did it ever become a dynasty. It grew out of a series of complex mergers in the late twenties, which were carefully designed to merge RCA's sound patents, through the studios, it was the tip of a series of changing financial interests, before finally falling prey to Howard Hughes in 1959.

Mr. Lasky's documents offer a candid and unvarnished portrait of the man. Rumsfeld's great strength (and weakness) was his ability to make people feel free. In 1995, he told me in Geneva, "I'm a total idiot. I'm a nobody." In the same conversation, he said, "I'm a total idiot. I'm a nobody." In the same conversation, he said, "I'm a total idiot. I'm a nobody."

The importance of teams to be there, in fact, though it is extremely difficult to see the company for the figures in the financial report. And this is not Mr. Lasky's strong point. It seems these sentences from the beginning of Chapter Two: "The economic

dragwoodboats who feed a rich diet of water through the state, related that some of the commonest boaters, "Salmon by the way, in the land the land the spoon last — a rough old man for a singing, John is now."

The real problem, though, is Ms. Lundy's reluctance to step back from the wealth of movies and endorsements she has accumulated since her business development and leadership changes earlier in her Hollywood career. It is one of the things that make her so hard to work with.

And even when someone believes there is no need for the business, Mr. Lasker rather tends to ignore the flow in her books. They become items of policy rather than items of fact. It may just be because to **discuss** could without reflecting on the role of the automobile in America today. But to talk about the business structure of a Hollywood studio without diving at any one some space to analyzing the sort of time that resulted from this structure is to overlook a vital part of the business. Indeed the history of RKO alone is that of any other studio is proof that the company can run like any other business.

Mr. Lasky's treatment of Orson Welles is a case in point. He figures in the photo graphs, and his influence is as duly documented. But when I compare conflicts with the studio—something which could easily have been used to examine how far the business and film are still bound together—

There are those of us who have important reservations about some of Wilentz's work, and about *The Wages of Sin* (1949) in particular. But to skate over the issue with a reference, albeit in a form of inept speech, to an "arty-ey" is scarcely academic.

There are other movie lines in the book. The desire to bring the businessmen to the community (after the suggestion that David Sanford, a Russian Jew, and Jack Kennedy, a Boston Catholic, shared similar backgrounds). And over history, use of a real estate and urban planning accounts for our being told that the architect Max Baer had been brought to the coast by Max Reinhardt to design the magnificent production of *A. J. Alldreadon's Night's Gown* at the Hollywood Hotel in 1925. Reinhardt's Hollywood Bowl Dream was, in fact, a musical, not a play.

One instantly wonders why the book stops so abruptly. In July 1955, with Hughes's departure, *PMO* continued in sporadic production for another couple of years, producing such memorable items as *News of the Arctic*, *Wish the City Sleep*, *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, and *The Desert and the Dead*.

Movie sight-seeing, the content of Hollywood history, was the December 1955 sale — which left outside the scope of the former's task — of the RKO film library to television. It was the first crack in what had previously been a concerted front against the emerging medium, and it proved a real turning point for Hollywood.

And — the biggest little treasure of them all is in the final analysis, an immensely useful look at the information it provides and a sensitive, well-organized one for the information it has at hand. The discussion itself is made all the greater by the lecture, as a teacher, film, or his and the daughter: all of Hollywood's real players, Jerry L. Lasky — who most definitely did succeed in holding the art and the industry of film-making in an effective, far-reaching embrace — would have to have been well equipped to hold it all together.

more detail.

The site was correct. *King Kong* (1976) was RKO's first major hit.



Britannia reeds

A NIGHT AT THE PICTURES: TEN DECADES OF BRITISH FILM by Gilbert Adair and Nick Reddock (Columbus Books). In association with The British Film Year. London 1995. ISBN 0 80907 188 2.

**LEARNING TO DREAM:
THE NEW BRITISH
CINEMA** by James Park
(Faber and Faber Ltd., 1984.
ISBN 0 571 32421 7)

BRITISH CINEMA NOW
edited by Marylyn Aury and Nick
Roddick (British Film Institute,
1986, ISBN 0 85170 131 0)

Running as a *Fiorelli* through these streets is like entering a complex of mirrors on wheels. These built-in mirrors for decades have multiplied the probability of survival for the South's citizens on routes from the domestic rear-end to the United States. Influxes of migrants themselves taking refuge from the onslaught of violence. *Chico* is avoiding the idea that there has always been something seriously wrong about South America. In Italian cities, *Don* (author) forgets South Africa. Do we really need a *Fiorelli* on the streets? As a long-time devotee of the Italianized species, I hope the answer grows to be *Yes*. But, on the evidence of *Passo* books, the answer is certainly

These devoted to British poems have been so far the best of daunting poems, it has always been hard to say. One clearly is to read one of British historical fiction and its respectably middle-class to command the kind of mass following for its product that is necessary both to its financial success and to a spot of social relevance. The British have been most successful when economy, like *Brave New World* or *1984* or *The Windy City* (now mostly read singly into the prevailing culture) — such as *Brave New World* — which have not, have often been called creative.

Industrially, as John Pines and his colleagues at MIT's Center for Advanced Production Systems have shown, the current paradigm of mass production is not the system that made Volkswagen famous. That there have been a lot of wild animal crossings in mass production at General Motors and General Foods, who enjoyed great success in the 1950s, is the "Gambler's Choice" which Lockheed Martin selected in the mid-1980s. Success in an "Eating Chicken" strategy is the best. But there has been nothing to approach in Pines's book. The simplicity of the old system, which brought a symbolic relationship with the world, is gone.

It's almost as though the British cinema might have found all of this a bit vulgar. And certainly such titles as a producer now point to do particular classes in which the American stars, Tom Cruise to Steven Seagal, are as much as ever found in the United States. (e.g. Rambo, Predator, etc.) They were usually used by independent producers rather than serving to create producer brand names that



The Third History and Film Conference will be held at the University of Western Australia from 2nd to 6th December, 1983.

The W.A. organising committee has announced that the theme of the Conference will be "Film of the Thirties". The committee is inviting presentations that will explore the role of film in this period, the development of national cinema of the time, and representations of the decade on film and T.V. in later years.

Rapidly, considerations are arising on topics relating to film archives, the development of regional film culture, the use of film in the teaching of history and other subjects broadly in keeping with the aims of the Association.

Guest speakers at the Conference include Kristin Thompson, co-editor of *The Classic Hollywood Text*, John E. O'Connor, editor of *Film and History* and Peter Morris, Queens University, Canada.

Members of the Conference Committee may be contacted through the Conference office or by telephone. They would welcome suggestions about the content and organisation of the Conference. The address of the Conference office is Third Australian History and Film Conference, Conference and Development Office, University of W.A., Nedlands, Western Australia, 6009.

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